

SCIENTIFIC NOTES

Additional Distribution Records for Nearctic Species of *Ptenus* Kirby (Hymenoptera: Argidae: Sterictiphorinae).¹—Smith (1970. Trans. Amer. Entomol. Soc. 96: 79–101) revised the Nearctic species of *Ptenus* Kirby, recognizing 2 previously named species and describing 10 new species. The collection of the Department of Entomology at Texas A & M University (College Station) contains several specimens of *Ptenus* spp. collected in Texas and Mexico, some which extend the known distributions of several species into east-central and southeastern Mexico. The purpose of this paper is to redefine the distributions previously described by Smith, and to list additional collection records of some of the Nearctic species.

Ptenus bicolor Smith was described from eastern and southeastern Texas, and extreme northeastern Mexico (Matamoros). The known distribution of this species is extended to include eastern Mexico south to southeastern Vera Cruz. Additional records include: TEXAS: Cameron Co., Brownsville; San Patricio Co., Welder Wildlife Refuge. MEXICO: Nuevo Leon, 9 mi. s. Monterrey; San Luis Potosi, El Salto; Tamaulipas, 11.3 mi. n. Ciudad Victoria, and 8.5 mi. s. Soto La Marina; Vera Cruz, 7 mi. n. e. Mata Espino. Collection dates range from early June to mid-August.

Ptenus imus Smith was described from southern Texas (Laredo and Brownsville) and northeastern Mexico (Tampico). The known distribution of this species is extended north along the Gulf of Mexico coast to Corpus Christi. Additional records include: TEXAS: San Patricio Co., Corpus Christi St. Park, 25-VIII-1962.

Ptenus magnus Smith was described from western Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Additional records include: TEXAS: Jeff Davis Co., Madera Canyon, w. of Ft. Davis, 9-VIII-1969.

Ptenus modestius Smith was described from Arizona, California, and Texas as far east as Brownsville and Austin. The known distribution of this species is extended north in Texas to Bosque Co., north along the Gulf of Mexico coast to San Patricio Co., and south into Mexico to southwestern Tamaulipas (16 mi. n. e. Jaumave). Additional records include: TEXAS: Bosque Co., 2 mi. w. Iredell; Cameron Co., 3 mi. w. Brownsville; Gonzales Co., Palmetto St. Park; Presidio Co., 2 mi. s. Shafter; Refugio Co., 8 mi. s. Woodsboro; San Patricio Co., 7 mi. n. Sinton, and Mathis. MEXICO: Tamaulipas, 11.3 mi. n. Ciudad Victoria and 16.3 mi. n. e. Jaumave. Collection dates range from mid-March to mid-July.

Ptenus nigropectus (Norton) was known previously from "eastern and northern Texas, east through Louisiana to Mississippi" (Smith, *ibid.*). Additional records extend the known distribution of this species to include Texas, from the panhandle south to San Antonio, southeast to Brownsville, east through Louisiana into Mississippi, and south into Mexico to northern Vera Cruz (18.6 mi. s. Tampico). Additional records include: TEXAS: Bosque Co., 3 mi. w. Laguna Park; Brazos Co., Minter Springs, and College Station; Burnet Co., Longhorn Cavern St. Park; Kerr Co., Kerrville; Refugio Co., 8 mi. s. Woodsboro. MEXICO: Nuevo Leon, 9 mi. s. Monterrey; Vera Cruz, 18.6 mi. s. Tampico. Collection dates in Texas range from mid-April to early June. The Mexican specimens were collected in mid-August.

¹ Technical Article 11412, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station.

Ptenus parvus Smith was described from western Texas and Arizona. Additional records include: TEXAS: Brewster Co., 43 mi. s. Alpine, 7-VI-1972; Presidio Co., 3 mi. n. Presidio, 1-IX-1966.

Ptenus texanus (Norton) is known from Texas and Mexico. Additional records include: MEXICO: Coahuila, Puerta de la Gorriona, el. 4900 ft., Sierra del Carmen, 13-VII-1938.

Ptenus vanus Smith was described from New Mexico, Arizona, and the bordering Sierra del Carmen mountains of Mexico (Coahuila). The known distribution of this species is extended south in Mexico to central Vera Cruz. Additional records include: MEXICO: Vera Cruz, 4 mi. w. Conejos, 29-VI-1971.

Ptenus vargus Smith was described from 2 females taken at "port of entry" from Mexico at Brownsville, Texas. The first specific records from Mexico are Nuevo Leon, 7.5 mi. s. Monterrey and 9 mi. s. Monterrey, and San Luis Potosi, 13.4 mi. w. El Naranjo. Collection dates range from mid-March to mid-August. The proximity of these localities to the Mexican-United States border suggests that *P. vargus* probably occurs also in southern Texas, as suggested by Smith (ibid.).

I wish to thank D. R. Smith (ARS, USDA, Washington, D. C.) for his suggestions and for his determinations of many of the specimens reported in this paper.—HAROLD N. GREENBAUM², *Department of Entomology, Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas 77843.*

A Mountain-top Swarm of the Hemipteran *Nysius raphanus* in New Mexico, with Notes on Other Insects.—Capulin Mountain National Monument, situated in extreme northeastern New Mexico, has as its central attraction an extinct volcanic cinder cone. This is thinly forested with pinyon pine and rises a thousand feet (summit is 8,215') above the surrounding treeless plain. When Ray G. Martinez, Jr., Park Superintendent, kindly gave me a permit for collecting insects there (May 9, 1974), he said that visitors had complained for the past two weeks of vast swarms of small "flies" on the summit trail around the crater rim. Near midday, at the summit parking lot, hikers descending from the trail did indeed seem harassed. A short climb up the trail brought me into an area where the air was filled with flying, small, hard-bodied insects that pelted one's face like grains in a sandstorm. This situation extended for about a half-mile of the trail. The insects proved to be a species of lygaeid, identified as *Nysius raphanus* Howard by Jon L. Herring of the USDA Systematic Laboratory at Beltsville. Both females and males were present in about equal numbers. This species has long been regarded as a synonym of *N. ericae* (Schilling), the False chinch bug.

As the day progressed, the wind became brisk, and the *Nysius* sought shelter in the small pinyons. A blow with a net handle on a tree produced a thick gray cloud of insects that quickly drifted down wind; each pass of the net through such a cloud captured a few hundred of the insects. *Nysius* was not seen near the base of the mountain.

Near the highest point of the mountain, just down wind from the tip of a tall

² Present Address: Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611.